

NORTH CAPITOL AND ECKINGTON CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION

A Brief Review of the Work for Public Good Accomplished by This Organization During the Seven Years of Its Existence—Sketch of Its Officers, Past and Present.



W. G. HENDERSON, President.

ONE of the most active and efficient citizens' associations of the District is the North Capitol and Eckington Association. Though it has been in existence only seven years, it has accomplished as much for the section which it represents as some of the older bodies. From the start this association has been made up of active men deeply interested in the improvement of the Eckington and Bloomingdale subdivisions, and they have given their time and efforts to the public good in a manner to count, in the paving of streets, the erection of school houses and the betterment of transit facilities.

The men composing this body have never been chimerical in their plans, but have worked along faithfully year after year toward the goal of bringing up the two subdivisions mentioned to the same standard of public improvement which prevailed in the city. In this they have been successful, and that section of the city on both sides of North Capitol Street, northward from M Street, is now as far advanced as any part of Northwest Washington.

Organized Seven Years Ago.

The North Capitol and Eckington Citizens' Association was organized on the evening of January 15, 1896, with forty-six members. The officers elected were: William G. Henderson, president; H. D. Norris, vice president; S. M. Lettzel, treasurer, and William J. Hughes, secretary, and with the following chairman

of committees: Philip F. Happ, on membership; A. Ralph Seren, on railways; T. P. Kane, on the press; S. M. Lettzel, on streets, sidewalks and lights; Dr. Mark W. Moore, on sewers and water; H. E. Williams, on fire and police protection; C. M. D. Browne, on city limits; J. D. Biddis, on schools and schoolhouses; E. M. Harmon, on parks and parking; and A. O. Tingley, on mail facilities, the executive committee being William G. Henderson, W. J. Hughes, Edward Kern, J. F. Bancroft, and W. J. Foulke.

Its First Meeting.

The first meeting of the association was held in the Hotel Eckington, and the occasion has been remembered as the most important, possibly, in the life of the association. Great interest was displayed in the objects of the organization, and few improvement societies in Washington have had a better beginning. Since the opening night the membership has constantly increased until the rolls of the association now carry 300 names.

The present officers are William G. Henderson, president; James A. Connor, vice president, and A. O. Tingley, secretary and treasurer, and the executive committee consists of these officers: Edward Foulke, Solon C. Kemm, Dr. E. D. Thompson, and W. W. Porter.

The association is unique in that it is the only body of the kind whose territory is partly urban and partly suburban, the territorial limits being

bounded by M Street on the south; Second Street northwest on the west; the Soldiers' Home or Michigan Avenue on the north, and the Brentwood Road on the east. The title, North Capitol and Eckington Citizens' Association, was selected because North Capitol Street is the dividing line between the northeast and the northwest sections of the city, and the efforts of the association were to be directed toward improvements to the east and to the west of North Capitol Street, north of M Street and within the limits specified.

Mr. Henderson's Terms of Office.

Mr. Henderson served as president from January, 1896, until January, 1899, when he was succeeded by A. Ralph Seren, who declined re-election on account of his time being fully occupied as chief examiner of the Civil Service Commission. He was succeeded by Irwin B. Linton, who served for the year 1900 and declined re-election because of the pressure of his professional engagements, whereupon Mr. Henderson was again selected as president, and has continued to serve in that capacity.

Extension of Street Railways.

The association has taken an active interest in all matters relating to the welfare of the District of Columbia, at large, and has been particularly active in advancing the interests of the particular area of the District comprised within the limits defined at the time of organization. It was largely instrumental in having the underground electric railway system extended beyond the boundary, or Florida Avenue, both the North Capitol Street car line and the New York Avenue line. It was the intention of the street railway companies to have the underground system stop at Florida Avenue, the imaginary dividing line between the city and the county, but through the efforts of the association before Congress, the street railway bills were so amended that the underground electric system was installed beyond Florida Avenue, in the two directions named, and the development of that section of the District since that time has fully justified the vigorous policy pursued by the association in having Florida Avenue eliminated as the boundary line between the city and county, and in obtaining for that section the benefits of the under-

ground system. The association was also energetic in opposing the desires of the street railway companies, to pave between their tracks and for two feet outside thereof with cobblestones, and through efforts then made the railway companies were obliged to pave between their tracks with the same character of pavement laid by the District outside of the tracks, and thus the cobblestone nuisance was abated.

Through the work of the association the first fire engine company for that section was located on North Capitol Street, near R Street, and from that time dates the era of having the buildings of the fire engine companies made of an artistic architectural design.

The association has also been active in behalf of the school system of the District, and through its representations to the School Board, to the Commissioners, and to Congress, three school buildings have been erected in its territory, the first building being the Eckington School, located at First and Quincy Streets northeast; the second being the Emory School, on Lincoln Avenue north of R Street, and the third being the new school building provided at the last session of Congress to accommodate the Bloomingdale section, and to be located on Second Street or Le Droit Avenue in the vicinity of W Street northwest.

First in School Reform.

This association was the first to agitate a reform in the system of instruction prevailing in the public schools prior to the creation of the present Board of Education, and it interested the other citizens' associations in the movement and the beneficial results are now recognized by all citizens of the District.

The association has also taken an active part in the legislation relating to the abolition of steam railroad grade crossings in the city, and for the erection of a union station, giving its influence in behalf of the movement, but seeking to have the legislation so framed that the least possible injury should be done to property and the greatest good accomplished for the greatest number.

The association has pursued a conservative policy in whatever it has advocated, but having once decided on its

course of action it has carried on its work with vigor. Its present place of meeting is in the hall of St. Martin's Church at North Capitol and T Streets, which it found necessary to secure in order to accommodate its present large membership.

In addition to the stated meetings at which the regular business is transacted it has had a number of public meetings of a social, literary, and musical character, with the view of getting together the families of the citizens in its territory. These meetings have been distinguished by large attendance of the citizens, and on these and other occasions the association has been favored with the presence of the Commissioners of the District and of prominent citizens from other sections of the city, and the exercises provided have always been of an interesting and entertaining character.

Chairman of the School Committee.

The chairman of the committee on schools and school houses is A. Ralph Seren, who has been particularly active in educational matters, and whose name was prominently before the Commissioners for the vacancy in the Board of Education occasioned by the resignation of Gen. George H. Harries. The present chairman of its committee on street railways is William J. Hughes, who is a charter member of the association, and who has always been active in efforts to increase the efficiency of the street railway service throughout the District of Columbia, and who was prominently identified as a member of the joint railway committee made up of representatives from the fifteen citizens' associations of the District to urge before the Commissioners the presentation of a bill to Congress vesting the operation of the street railways in the District of Columbia, with the view of insuring better street railway accommodations for the public and of having the Commissioners stand as an impartial tribunal between the railway companies and the citizens. The chairman of other committees of the association are noted for the energy they display in directing the work over which they have supervision.

The citizens of Eckington and Bloomingdale have exhibited noteworthy public spirit with reference to the closing of streets and taking of property for the Baltimore and Ohio viaduct. The proposed construction of the new terminal will affect Eckington more seriously than any other portion of the District outside of South Washington. Houses and lots have been sacrificed, the value of property affected, and will be more seriously affected in the future, yet this association has been faithful to the principle of obliterating the grade crossings ever since the agitation began. On the first trip of inspection taken by the Commissioners in company with the engineers of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, to examine the plans in Baltimore a representative of the association was a member of the party, and the interest taken in the scheme at that time has never flagged for an instant. Members of the association have been identified with every move made for the accomplishment of the purpose named, and the only opposition the railroad company has met from Eckington has been in the way of protest against too much interference with the highways and the shutting in of private property.

The objections of the association, such as they have been, have been presented in such a practical way that the engineers of the company have recognized the force of facts, and the association in almost every instance has carried its points. There will be no injunctions and no hindrance to the scheme from the citizens of Eckington. The utility of the union station is believed in by the people of that subdivision. They are satisfied also that after the work is completed and the debris of construction is removed that their section, with all Northeast Washington, will see an era of improvement and enhancement of property values impossible under the old conditions. The period of construction with all its inconvenience and disturbance will be patiently borne, the property holders of Eckington and Bloomingdale realizing that their section is finally to be benefited more than it will be damaged by the new improvements.

Much of the success achieved by the

North Capitol and Eckington Association has been due to the personal efforts of Mr. Henderson, the president. Mr. Henderson is a patent attorney with a large practice, and has offices in the third story of the Norris Building, at the corner of F and Fifth Streets northwest. He is interested in Eckington property to some extent, and as president of the association has taken an active part in all its enterprises. Much of his time for the past seven years has been taken up in meetings of committees and in accompanying delegations to the District Building and the Capitol. Mr. Henderson has a lawyer's skill in presenting matters to the Commissioners and to the committees in Congress. He talks directly to the root of things, and the special plea to be presented has been so studied and the facts so well digested that only a brief time is necessary to place the subject before the authorities. This is perhaps the secret of the power of the association, though Mr. Henderson has been ably seconded in his efforts by A. R. Seren, W. J. Hughes and one or two other attorneys belonging to the association.

Committeeman Thompson.

One of the most active of the committeemen is Dr. E. D. Thompson, in charge of the committee on sanitation. Dr. Thompson travels over the jurisdiction of the association every day in his professional work, and, it may be said, knows every pool of stagnant water, every refuse heap, every bad smell and broken drain in the whole section. Whenever anything is wrong Dr. Thompson is the first to discover it, and his idea of public duty is such that he is prompt in presenting the matter to the association, and sometimes takes affairs into his own hands by informing the authorities and having repairs made and sanitary conditions restored.

The objects of the North Capitol and Eckington Citizens' Association, as succinctly set forth in its constitution, and which in the seven years of its history have been measurably realized, are: "To devise and co-operate in carrying into effect measures for the advancement of the public interests of the section of the city and suburbs lying within and bounded" as already given.

WHEN MOTHER-IN-LAW RULES

"FOREIGN DEVILS," as Europeans are courteously termed in China, are not greatly welcomed in Chinese houses, especially by the women.

"What is your venerable age?" will probably be the first inquiry made by your host or hostess, as the case may be. It is the correct thing to show an interest in the most personal details of the visitor's life and doings. To this question the correct reply is, "I have lived in vain for — years," and the more years you mendaciously add to your real age the greater will be your respectability in Chinese eyes.

If you are a man the possession of a flowing beard—which in China is usually a mark of advancing years—will add very materially to the respect with which you are regarded. Not only your own age, but that of your relatives, will be discussed, as will also your income and other matters about which truthful answers will probably not be forthcoming.

Early in your visit you will be invited to take tea, which will be presented in tiny cups, without sugar or cream, but possessing a delicacy of aroma quite unknown in the West.

Bird's nest soup, made from the gelatinous nests of the edible swallows; stewed tripe, or sea slug; ragout of rats; fricassee of frogs; lamb stewed in syrup of almonds, and even loqu of puppy—all these, and many equally fearsome dishes, may be set before you. Among the villagers and the poor folks who form the river population the fare is meager in the extreme. Their staple food consists of steamed rice, rendered more savory by a bit of salt fish or a scrap of pork fat. But the European visitor is not at all likely to sample this diet.

In the homes of the middle class the mother-in-law reigns supreme. But it is the husband's mother in this case, and it is the wife who has to bear the brunt of it. Her first duty of the day is to rise early and prepare tea for her husband and mother-in-law, after which she generally superintends the work of the domestic slaves, shouting her orders and showing a somewhat shrewish disposition. This is not the time to see the lady at her best.

The afternoon is usually spent in embroidery and other kinds of needlework, while in the evening the ladies sit in the courtyard watching the children at play, gossiping and smoking. Widows of some little education are sometimes employed to read novels and play to their mistresses, and in this way many of them earn a comfortable living.

Philadelphia Not Slow.

"PEOPLE will tell you that Philadelphia is slow; in fact, it's such a standing joke that most of us believe it by this time, but I came across an innovation in the old city the other day which I think of adopting here in Washington."

"What was it?" inquired a brother architect.

"It was a moth-proof closet. I happened to be going through a house that was for rent in Philadelphia the other day, and when I opened a closet I found it flooded with light, for there was a good sized window in it. There was a window in all the larger closets, so every day the clothes will get a generous share of sun. You know as well as I do that sun is one of the best preservatives of cloth going. Why, I have found that clothes, hung in the sunlight, never attacked by moths."

"Besides, the window prevents the closet from being damp, and so preserves the clothes stored in it against mildew. But the best of all, it won't be necessary to fumble around with a match or a candle and set fire to the clothing, or if you don't do that rick up your temper because you burn your fingers—simply open the door and if it's daylight outside there'll be plenty of light in the closet. It's a bully idea, my boy, and mark my words, it won't be long before the Washington closets all have windows the same as Philadelphia's."

A Selfish Motive.

Little Effie—Do you love me very much, mamma?

Mamma (a widow)—Yes, my darling.

Effie—Then why don't you marry the man at the candy store?—San Francisco Wasp.

Pig's Feet as Medicine.

"THE story sent out from Washington had not been able to sleep for a month, not even for a few minutes, may seem incredible to persons accustomed to their eight hours every night," says a specialist in neurasthenia, in the "Philadelphia Ledger," "but in the profession we are constantly coming across such instances."

"Most persons would suppose that a man or woman going without sleep for a month would succumb to sheer exhaustion. Nothing of the kind. Many patients refuse to take narcotics, no matter how long they go without sleep, and when they do feel that way the doctor seldom insists."

"I had a patient this winter who never slept a wink for forty-two days. He was suffering from a common form of insomnia. I got his digestion all right inside of a month by regulating his diet and giving him a hearty meal of pig's feet about three hours before bed time. It was as successful as it has been in other cases."

"No, I don't say that there is any virtue in pig's feet as a sedative, but in the digestive process they induce restful slumber, quite different from the stupor induced by heavy feeding."

Obliging the Conductor.

"STEP LIVELY!" bawled the conductor as the crowd started to board his car; "step lively, there!"

The portly father climbed, wheezing, aboard, carrying a small and chubby boy. Next came a little bright-eyed girl of six, perhaps, while the mother climbed on last, carrying the baby.

"Mercy on us, Heeter!" said the mother. "What are you hopping about that way for?"

"Why, mamma," she said, still eyeing the stern conductor; "I'm stepping lively!"

TROLLEYIZATION OF THE DISTRICT

What the Electric Car Has Done for Washington in the Past Twenty Years.

TAKEN off his wheels, and set in a big back yard, windows broken, seat coverings torn, floor covered with sand and echoing with the shouts and laughter of children at play—there he stands, one of the sturdiest pioneers in the development of Washington. Like old Dobbin, the family horse, who had outlived his days of usefulness, this decrepit electric trolley car is made to amuse the children since he can no longer carry their parents.

For the man who has lived in Washington during the past twenty years, this old trolley car speaks heart to heart. He knows what it has done for the Capital City, he recalls its entry and he, too, sees the pathos in its present employment as dry nurse.

A Beginning Made.

Twenty years ago a number of street car companies had been started in Washington. The Washington and Georgetown Street Railway Company, first of all the city's car lines, was chartered May, 1882. In 1884 the Metropolitan began to run from the Capitol at A Street and New Jersey Avenue to Washington Circle, at Pennsylvania Avenue and Twenty-second Street. The Ninth Street and East Capitol lines were organized a year later, and the Connecticut Avenue line was absorbed by the Metropolitan. The Georgetown branch was started in the early seventies and eventually merged into the Metropolitan. It was known at the time as the Union Railway Company.

Advent of the Trolley.

These roads were all horse car lines, for the electric car was yet to enter Washington. Passengers were packed into tiny cars, drawn by bony horses, made to deposit their own fares and get their change from one another. Though the horse car was an immense improvement on walking, still the public rightly demanded better service. This was only forthcoming when the companies owning these roads were stirred to action by the advent of the trolley. In 1888 four suburban electric trolley lines were planned, and the Brightwood, Rock Creek, Tenleytown, Eckington, and Soldiers' Home lines were incorporated. The almost instantaneous effect of this was to direct the attention of Washington people to the beauty of the surrounding countryside.

Trolley parties became the rage, and it was the fad for a while to boom the trolley, because of the poor car service in the city. Accordingly, very many suggested that the trolley be run through Washington. The other large cities of the East were pointed to as examples of the beneficent results of trolleyism. This was strongly opposed,

however, by the saner and more conservative citizens, and on July 18, 1888, after an exciting contest in Congress and before the District committees an amendment was secured which provided that the Commissioners should not, after September 15 of that year, allow the erection of any more overhead wires in Washington.

Washington had passed safely through the rapid transit craze period, which is the name given to a sort of measles among cities. Almost all cities have it when they are young, and if they treat the disease in the proper way they come out of it stronger than they were before. If the measles are allowed to get the upper hand, however, the city becomes trolley-ridden and is cursed with accidents from that time on, for the trolley, though a good servant, is a very bad master and leads to all sorts of evil results. Today Washington is one of the very few cities where the trolley is forbidden to enter.

Benefits That Followed.

The coming of the trolley drew a sharp comparison between the horse car and the electric car, to the injury of the latter. The demands of the citizens for better transportation along their streets were finally acceded to, and on April 12, 1890, a cable line was installed on Seventh Street by the Washington and Georgetown Company. The cable system had already been tried abroad, notably at Budapest, Hungary, and the company wisely preferred to equip its line with a system that was in effective working operation elsewhere rather than wait for the development of a cheap storage battery system or the reduction of the cost of the electric conduit.

The lead of the Washington and Georgetown Company was followed by the Capital Traction Company, when on April 12, 1890, they laid a cable line on Pennsylvania Avenue.

On September 29, 1897, the powerhouse on Fourteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue was destroyed by fire. When there was question of starting the line again, it was determined to use the electric system instead of re-installing the old cable. Accordingly, February 22, 1898, the first electric car was run on Fourteenth Street, and the entire line was run by the same power April 20 of the same year. Thus the trolley is to be thanked in great measure for securing rapid transit for the citizens of Washington.

Other Valuable Effects.

The pushing of trolley lines into the country about Washington naturally raised the price of lots in that section very rapidly. Farmers who went to bed paupers awoke to find themselves rich. Values were created every day where none had existed before. Speculators came to the city in numbers, and lots were bought and sold every day.

The trolley, however, was a great boon to others besides the speculator. With its coming the oil lamp began to give way to the electric light; what had been a day's journey became an

hour's ride, and the clammy straw of the old horse car was changed for the electric heater. Not only was rapid transit secured in large part by the trolley, but comfortable transit as well. Suburban life began in good earnest, and those who had been obliged to live in the city in order to be near their work were able to live in the bracing air and country sunshine at least a few hours after their day of labor was over.

Build the Suburbs.

The rising young city man who spent his vacation days before that time on the roof, who sunbathed his arms while and then told his friends the particulars of his canoeing trip on the lakes, was able to escape from the softening concrete and enjoy a week in the country or take a new pleasure in the dash of the light electric car through the woods. Farmers who led a humdrum life, enlivened by only a weekly or a monthly visit to the city, awoke under the touch of this cheap and quick means of communicating with the city. The clerk who worked for the Government was enabled to do his daily portion of labor more cheerfully and with greater accuracy because of those few hours' communion with Nature after he reached his home in the suburbs.

With very few exceptions almost every suburb of Washington was built up after the inauguration of the trolley. In the making of Washington Heights, Mount Pleasant, Brookland, Columbia Heights, Langdon, Kensington, Woodside, Chevy Chase, Takoma, Woodbridge, Brightwood, and Petworth the trolley has played a large part.

Of course, there can be no doubt but what the advent of the trolley has done away with a great deal of the peace and quiet of country life, and the picturesqueness of the country surrounding Washington has been largely destroyed by the speculator. The trolley, however, continues, and we read that the 1,200 miles of tracks in the United States in 1890 have lengthened to 22,000 in 1902.

It lies with Congress, which has exclusive jurisdiction in such matters, to see that the land speculator does not prey upon this beautiful country at will. The District people look to the District committees in Congress to guard their interests in this particular.

To Rank With St. Peter's.

WORK on the great Episcopal Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York is being pushed on somewhat more rapidly than before. The progress so far has not been very encouraging. The cathedral was projected twelve years ago, and work upon it has been in progress for the past five years. Still, only one of the four great arches that are to support the central dome has been finished. Contractors say that the whole structure will not be finished for fifty years. Bishop Potter and the clergy men who are behind the movement have lost none of their enthusiasm. They declare that the cathedral will rank with St. Peter's in size and architectural beauty when it is completed.

OSTRICH FARMS IN AMERICA

THE introduction of the ostrich into America is quite a recent event.

Edwin Cawston, the proprietor of three large ostrich farms in America, left Natal, Africa, some twelve years ago, with a cargo of fifty-odd birds bound for California. Eight died on the ocean. The rest, save one, are all now deceased, but have laid the foundation for that vast army of ostriches that will one day supply the American milliner with American feather tips. The annual trade at the present time amounts to \$2,000,000. The Cawston ranch has for some years supplied zoological gardens and menageries.

California has the largest ostrich stock farms in America. Not very much success has so far attended the hatching of the American ostrich by incubators. Lately, however, out of a setting of ten healthy chicks resulted. Experiments are constantly being carried forward in this direction, although so far it has been found by the local ostrich farmer that nature, assisted by man, has proved to be the best conservator of ostrich life. Baby ostriches are the size of the ordinary hen, and are treated with the greatest care. In the day they eat alfalfa; in the night they are kept in

heated rooms and are fed with dainties from the kitchen; the consequence is—one of the marvels of ostrich life—they grow at the rate of twelve inches a month for the first six months.

The ostriches are docile to some extent and sometimes quarrelsome. The instinct of the hens is to run away from danger; they are voiceless and timid. The young males will fight sometimes, but generally flee.

A plucking of the birds occurs every few months, when each individual ostrich is led into a corner, at the acute angle of which is provided a little gate. Here its plumage is shorn off, and a boy is mounted upon it, and away it goes, striving to throw the youth, and after a few hundred yards invariably succeeds. The grotesque motions of the creature and the attitudes of the clinging boy amuse the attending crowd of visitors, and form, with the plucking, one of the features of the celebration. This program is usually carried out on holidays.

The young ostriches are not very beautiful. From their seventh month to the twelfth they are treated very much the same way as their parents. The food of an ostrich in California is alfalfa, corn, beets, and vegetables of all kinds, whichever product is sold at the lowest price at the different seasons of the year. Ostriches are also fed largely on pressed grape skins.

Porto Rican Stone Collars.

DR. J. WALTER FEWKES, of the Bureau of Ethnology in the Smithsonian Institution, has lately returned to Washington after a tour of Cuba, Porto Rico, and Jamaica. The trip was made for the purpose of discovering the origin and use of certain collars, about the size and shape of a horse collar, but made of stone. These collars were found by an American merchant during a sojourn of the islands. They are cut from the hardest sort of granite, and they have completely puzzled archaeologists.

Dr. Fewkes declares that he has gathered some valuable data about them, and thinks he will be able to throw some light on the collars. He took a number of notes, and is arranging them at present. His report is awaited with interest by the scientific world.

Long Lived Queen Ants.

THE question was raised recently among some students of the Western High School as to the queen ants live. Some one had read that these royal creatures live almost as long as a human being. The students ransacked the books, and it was learned that the late Sir John Lubbock conducted some experiments with the queen ant. One of his specimens was put in a special receptacle, where she could be always under observation. Surrounded by workers who fed and cared for her in the usual way, this ant attained the venerable age of fourteen years. Sir John thought as the result of his experiments that under natural conditions the sovereign of the ant hill might live to the age of twenty-one years.

A New Wall Covering.

SANITAS is the name of a new covering for walls which has made its appearance of late in many of the cities of the North. Those who have used it say that it is an ideal invention for the purpose, combining beauty, hygienic properties, durability and smallness of cost. Sanitas is a form of oilcloth, specially treated for wall covering. It is woven in such a way as to be almost entirely impervious to heat or cold, and is claimed to be germ proof by the manufacturers. Soap and water can be applied to it freely; even a hose has been turned on it in some Boston homes.

For libraries and music rooms sanitas comes in rich colors and beautiful designs. It is not so harsh as cartridge paper, nor so cheap in appearance as the common oil cloth of the kitchen. Friezes to match are sold with it, just as in the case of wall paper. For nurseries and living rooms sanitas comes in delightful blue-tints set off by white effects.

Wiles of the Barber.

A BALD-HEADED man sat in the barber's chair and wearily listened to the bald-headed barber, who urged him to try a hair tonic manufactured on the premises.

"We guarantee it to sprout hair on the balddest head," he babbed.

"Then why don't you use it on your own?" demanded the customer.

"Because the boss won't let me. He wants me to leave my head alone, so he can point me out as a 'before using' exhibit. My brother is the 'after using' man. He's not in just now, but you ought to see his hair!" And the barber winked at the other customer.